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AUTHOR Pillen, Michelle B.; Hoewing-Roberson, Renee C.
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ABSTRACT

As part of a substance abuse prevention project, a measure was developed in both English and Spanish to measure levels of acculturation among members of a Latino youth population for later comparison of acculturation with high-risk behaviors. The Latino Youth Acculturation Scale (LYAS) consists of 23 items. Eleven items deal with language use of the respondent; six items deal with television viewing, music, and eating habits; and six items focus on cultural activities. The LYAS was administered to students in the fifth through eighth grades at two Chicago (Illinois) elementary schools in predominantly Latino neighborhoods. Usable surveys were obtained from approximately 650 youths, of whom 33 percent were first-generation in the United States. Forty percent of the respondents self-identified themselves as Puerto Rican, 28 percent as Mexican, 5 percent as both Mexican and Puerto Rican, and 7 percent as other Latino ancestry. A principal components analysis with oblimin rotation performed on the 23 items produced 4 factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0 that accounted for 69 percent of the total variance. These factors were: (1) family identity; (2) self/peer identity; (3) customs; and (4) food. The LYAS appears to measure levels of acculturation in terms of these four factors. It has great utility because it is easy to administer, is written in Spanish and English, and was developed for more than a single Latino group. Three tables present study data, and two figures illustrate the degree of acculturation. An appendix contains the LYAS. (SLD)

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DEVELOPMENT OF AN ACCULTURATION MEASURE FOR LATINO YOUTH

Michelle B. Pillen, Ph.D. & Renee C. Hoewing-Roberson, M.A.
Chestnut Health Systems
702 W. Chestnut St.
Bloomington, IL 61701

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Development of an Acculturation Measure for Latino Youth

Michelle B. Pillen, Ph.D. & Renée C. Hoewing-Roberson, M.A.
Chestnut Health Systems
702 W. Chestnut St.
Bloomington, IL 61701

Introduction

As part of a larger substance abuse prevention project funded by the Federal Office of Substance Abuse Prevention (OSAP), the authors were asked to measure the levels of acculturation among a Latino youth population and then determine whether these levels of acculturation interact with high risk behaviors. One of first endeavors was to define acculturation. Although there is some disagreement among researchers on the process and identification of acculturation, it has been described as the cultural learning that takes place when immigrants come in contact with a new group, nation, or culture (Berry, 1980). When an individual is exposed to mainstream cultural patterns, he or she may experience changes in their language, preferences, and behaviors because of this contact (Marín & Marín, 1991). Researchers have shown that levels of acculturation among subgroups of Latinos may be related with other variables, including: mental health status (Szapocznik & Kurtines, 1980), levels of social support (Griffith & Villavicencio, 1985), and levels of alcoholism and drug use (Padilla et al., 1979). Our task was to measure and describe the levels of acculturation among a sample of Latino youth living in a Chicago community and then determine whether these levels interact with gang involvement and substance use.

A search of the literature for an established acculturation scale was fruitless. First, we were only able to find published acculturation scales for adults (Marín et al., 1987; Cuellar, Harris, & Jasso, 1980). There did not seem to be any published acculturation scales for youth. Second, most of the scales focused primarily on one specific Latino subgroup: Mexican-Americans (Burnam, Telles, Karno, Hough, & Escobar, 1987; Cuellar, Harris, & Jasso, 1980) or Cubans (Szapocznik & Kurtines, 1980). In addition, the majority of published acculturation scales primarily measured changes and preferences for language. Fourth, very few of the published acculturation scales had demonstrated validity and reliability (Marín & Marín, 1991). And finally, many of the acculturation scales used sociodemographic characteristics (e.g., generation of respondents, ethnicity of respondents) as a measurement rather than as a correlate of acculturation. As Marín and Marín (1991) point out, this strategy tends to produce spuriously high correlations between criterion and scale.

Given our unproductive literature search, the authors developed a measure in English and Spanish called the Latino Youth Acculturation Scale (LYAS). The LYAS consists of 23 items. Eleven of these items deal with language use of the respondent, their parents, and their peers. Six items concern the type of television programs watched, the type of music listened to, and the type of food eaten both when the respondent is with their family and when the respondent is alone. The remaining six items focus on cultural activities related to dances, holidays celebrated, and story-telling.

Sample and Method

The LYAS was administered anonymously, as part of a larger survey, to fifth through eighth graders at two Chicago elementary schools in predominantly Latino neighborhoods. The survey was read aloud in English to most classrooms while a Spanish version was orally administered to bilingual classrooms. Usable surveys were obtained from approximately 650 youth (90% of those enrolled). Forty percent of the youth self-identified themselves as Puerto Rican, 28% as Mexican, 5% as both Mexican and Puerto Rican, and 7% as being of another Latino ancestry such as Cuban, Guatemalan, Brazilian, Salvadorean, etc. Sixteen percent of the youth identified themselves as African American and 2% as European, White, not Hispanic. One percent of the sample described themselves in terms of European, Middle Eastern, or Asian nationalities and are referred to as 'other'. First generation youth comprised 33% of the sample, 36% of the youth said at least one of their parents had been born in the United States, while 31% reported that both parents had been born in the United States.

Results

A principal components analysis with oblimin rotation performed on the 23 original items produced four factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0 that together accounted for 69% of the total variance. Table 1 lists all items and exact factor loadings. The first factor accounted for 51.3% of the variance and was labelled "Family Identity". This factor was comprised of nine items, all of which loaded above .60. These items measured language of the respondent's mother and father inside and outside of the home, television programs watched with the family, stories and dances the family knew, type of music listened to with the family, and language the respondent used inside the home. The second factor accounted for 8.1% of the total variance and was labelled "Self/Peer Identity". This factor included six items, all loading above .45, measuring use of language by the respondent outside of home, the language the respondent thought in, the language the respondent read and wrote best in, and the language used by the respondent's friends inside and outside of home. The third factor, labelled "Customs" accounted for 4.9% of the total variance and was comprised of four items with loadings greater than .45: holidays celebrated by the respondent and the respondent's family, type of stories the respondent knew, and kind of music listened to by the respondent when alone. The final factor, labelled "Food" consisted of two items each loading above .70 that referred to the kind of food eaten when the respondent was alone and with the family. Two items (type of T.V. watched by self and kinds of dances you know) failed to load above .45 on any factor and were excluded from further analyses. Exact interfactor correlations ranged from .10 to .60 and can be found in Table 2.

Subsequent item analyses were performed on each of the four resulting subscales. Family identity yielded a coefficient alpha of .95 with a minimum item-total correlation of .71. The subscale of self/peer identity achieved an alpha of .89 with a minimum item-total correlation of .61. The factor of customs produced coefficient alpha of .81 with a minimum item-total correlation of .51. The final factor of food yielded an alpha of .75 with a minimum item-total correlation of .61.

Validity was assessed through several analyses. One way ANOVA's performed on the individual subscales revealed that they discriminated well among different generations. Specifically, post hoc Tukey tests showed that for parents' language, self/peer identity, and customs, third generation youth were significantly more acculturated than second generation youth who were themselves more acculturated than first generation youth. Third generation youth were significantly more acculturated in terms of food preferences than were first and second generation youth (see Figure 1). The subscales also discriminated among different self-identified ethnic groups. In terms of family identity and customs subscales, Mexicans were significantly less acculturated than were Mexican/Puerto Ricans, Puerto Ricans, and other Latinos, who were all significantly less acculturated than African Americans, whites, and other ethnic groups. Regarding food preferences, Whites, others, and African Americans were significantly more acculturated than other Latinos, Mexican/Puerto Ricans, Puerto Ricans, and Mexicans. For self/peer identity, African Americans were significantly more acculturated than Whites, Mexican/Puerto Ricans, Puerto Ricans, and other Latinos, who were all more acculturated than Mexicans. Figure 2 illustrates the ethnic identification results and Table 3 gives exact means for the self/peer identity subscale.

Content saturation analyses were also conducted for each item of the LYAS as discussed in Jackson (1971). Using the corrected item-scale correlation and the item-social desirability scale correlation for each item, differential reliability indices were computed. Results of these analyses indicated that, at worst, 50% of item variability could be attributed to item content. In addition, each item's correlation with its own scale was compared with its highest correlation with any other irrelevant scales found in the LYAS. Every item's corrected correlation with its own scale was significantly higher than its highest correlation with any irrelevant scale.

Discussion

The Latino Youth Acculturation Scale appears to measure levels of acculturation in terms of family identity, self/peer identity, customs, and food preference. It has great utility for several reasons. The LYAS is easy to administer, is written in both English and Spanish, and was developed for more than a single Latino group. While the results of our study are positive, there are a few shortcomings to the LYAS. First, it has only been administered and analyzed with one sample of Latino youth. The authors would like to utilize the LYAS with different populations. Second, it is unclear if the results of this study would be sustained if the sample consisted primarily of refugees instead of immigrants (e.g., Cubans, Guatemalans, Nicaraguans). Because refugees are forced out of their country of origin, versus immigrants choosing to leave their country of origin, there may be different findings around levels of acculturation for Latino refugees. And finally, the LYAS does not measure other areas of psychological functioning that may be affected when an immigrant is exposed to mainstream cultural patterns (e.g., attitudinal changes). Future work is concerned with generating interest in other researchers to use the LYAS. In addition, the authors are interested in assessing how levels of acculturation interact as a modifying variable for high risk behavior among youth.

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Table 1
Rotated Factor Loadings of Latino Youth Acculturation Scale

Items	F_1	F_2	F_3	F_4
Language mother/step speaks at home	.95	-	-	-
Language father/step speaks at home	.91	-	-	-
Language mother/step speaks outside home	.87	-	-	-
Language father/step speaks outside home	.86	-	-	-
Type of T.V. watched with family	.80	-	-	-
Kind of stories your family knows	.71	-	-	-
Kind of dances your family knows	.69	-	-	-
Language you speak at home	.65	-	-	-
Type of music you listen to with family	.62	-	-	-
Language your best friends speak outside home	-	.93	-	-
Language your best friends speak at home	-	.79	.48	-
Language you read better	-	.52	-	-
Language you write better	-	.52	-	-
Language you speak outside home	-	.51	-	-
Language in which you think	-	.46	-	-
Type of T.V. you watch by self	-	-	-	-
Holidays you celebrate	-	-	.90	-
Holidays you celebrate with your family	-	-	.76	-
Kind of stories you know	-	-	.60	-
Kind of music you listen to by yourself	-	-	.46	-
Kind of dances you know	-	-	-	-
Kind of food you eat by yourself	-	-	-	.74
Kind of food you eat with your family	-	-	-	.70
Conceptual Labels	Family Identity	Self/Peer Identity	Customs	Food
Variance accounted for	51.3%	8.1%	4.9%	4.7%

Note: Dashes indicate loadings of less than .45.

Table 2
Inter-Factor Correlations

	Family Identity	Self/Peer Identity	Customs	Food
Family Identity	1.00	.48	.60	.34
Self/Peer Identity	-	1.00	.42	.10
Customs	-	-	1.00	.21
Food	-	-	-	1.00

Table 3
Tukey-Kramer Post Hoc Tests of the Relationship Between Ethnic Identification and Self/Peer Identity

	Other 28.900	African American 28.408	White 27.182	Mexican/ Puerto Rican 24.875	Puerto Rican 24.315	Other Latino 23.767	Mexican 18.294
Other	-	.492	1.718	4.025	4.585*	5.133*	10.606*
Afr. Am.		-	1.226	3.533*	4.093*	4.641*	10.114*
White			-	2.307	2.867	3.415	8.888*
Mex./P.R.				-	.56	1.108	6.581*
P. Rican					-	.548	6.021*
Other Lat.						-	5.473*
Mexican							-

* $p < .05$

Figure 1
Generational Differences for Degree of Acculturation

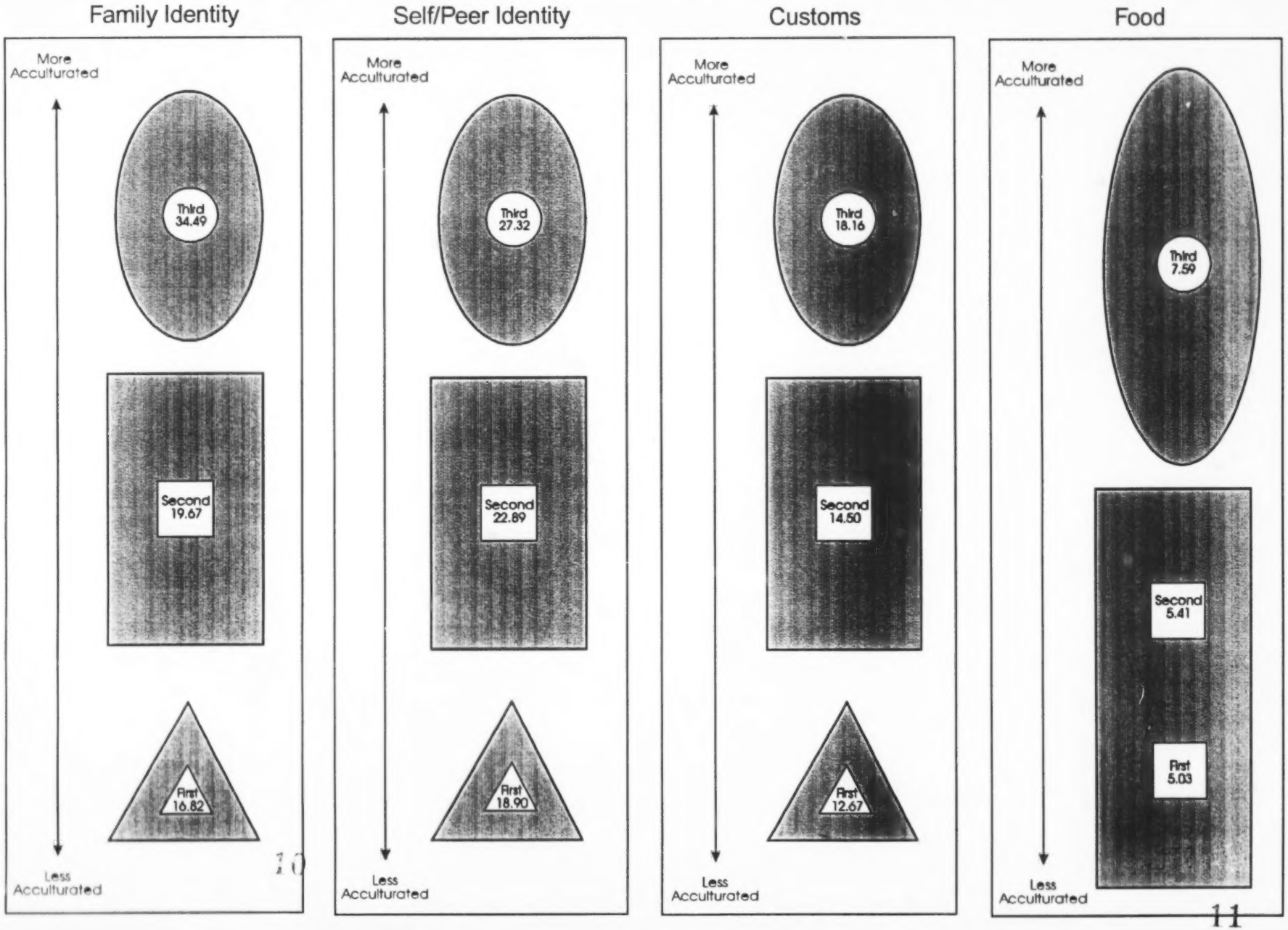
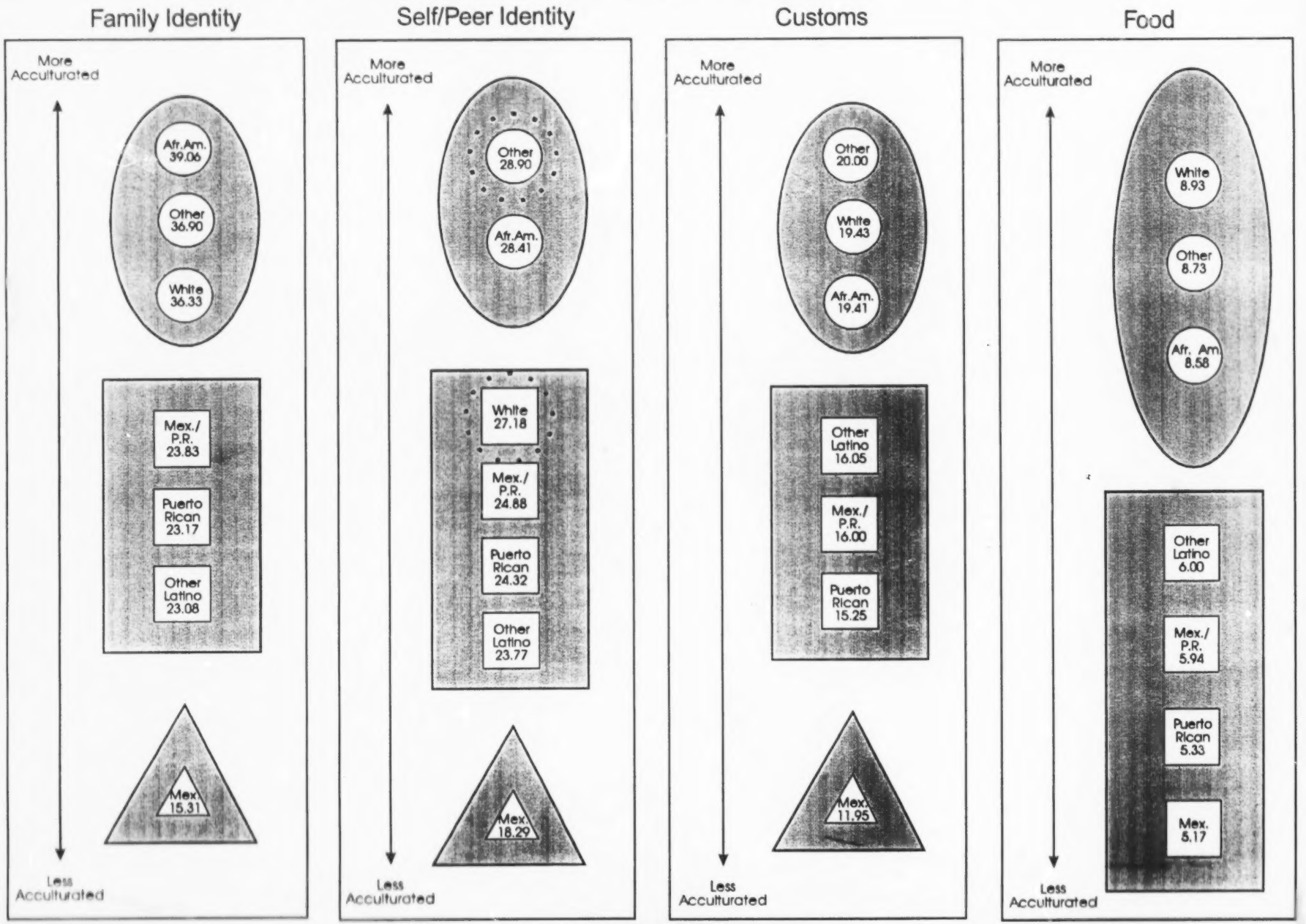


Figure 2
The Relationship of Ethnic Identification to Degree of Acculturation



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Appendix

LATINO YOUTH ACCULTURATION SCALE

Michelle B. Pillen, Ph.D. and Renée C. Hoewing-Roberson, M.A.
Chestnut Health Systems
702 W. Chestnut
Bloomington, IL 61701

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Latino Youth Acculturation Scale

For each question, please check <u>one</u> answer.

	Only Spanish	Mostly Spanish	Spanish and English	Mostly English	Only English	Other (write in)
1. What language do you speak at home?						
2. What language do you speak outside home?						
3. What language does your mother or stepmother speak at home?						
4. What language does your mother or stepmother speak outside home?						
5. What language does your father or stepfather speak at home?						
6. What language does your father or stepfather speak outside home?						
7. What language do your best friends speak at home?						
8. What language do your best friends speak outside home?						
9. In what language do you think?						
10. Which language do you read better?						
11. Which language do you write better?						

SAMPLE

12. What kind of **music** do you listen to by yourself?

- ❑ Only or mostly Latin/Spanish music
- ❑ Both Latin/Spanish and American music
- ❑ Only or mostly American music

13. What kind of **music** do you listen to with your family?

- ❑ Only or mostly Latin/Spanish music
- ❑ Both Latin/Spanish and American music
- ❑ Only or mostly American music

14. What type of **TV** programs do you watch by yourself?

- ❑ Only or mostly programs in Spanish
- ❑ Both Spanish and English programs
- ❑ Only or mostly English programs

15. What type of **TV** programs do you watch with your family?

- ❑ Only or mostly programs in Spanish
- ❑ Both Spanish and English programs
- ❑ Only or mostly English programs

16. What kind of **food** do you eat when you are by yourself?

- ❑ Only or mostly Latin American food
- ❑ Both Latin American and American food
- ❑ Only or mostly American food

17. What kind of **food** do you eat with your family?

- ❑ Only or mostly Latin American food
- ❑ Both Latin American and American food
- ❑ Only or mostly American food

SAMPLE

18. What kind of **holidays** do you celebrate?

- ❑ Only or mostly Latino holidays (La Posada, Three King's Day, Día de la Raza)
- ❑ Both Latino and American holidays (La Posada, Thanksgiving, Three King's Day, Fourth of July, Día de la Raza, Valentine's Day)
- ❑ Only or mostly American holidays (Thanksgiving, Fourth of July, Valentine's Day)

19. What kind of **holidays** do you celebrate with your family?

- ❑ Only or mostly Latino holidays (La Posada, Three King's Day, Día de la Raza)
- ❑ Both Latino and American holidays (La Posada, Thanksgiving, Three King's Day, Fourth of July, Día de la Raza, Valentine's Day)
- ❑ Only or mostly American holidays (Thanksgiving, Fourth of July, Valentine's Day)

20. What kind of **dances** do you know?

- ❑ Only or mostly Latino dances (plena, salsa, bomba, merengue, cumbia)
- ❑ Both Latino and American dances (disco, plena, break dancing, salsa, vogueing, bomba, merengue, cumbia)
- ❑ Only or mostly American dances (disco, break dancing, vogueing)

21. What kind of **dances** does your family know?

- ❑ Only or mostly Latino dances (plena, salsa, bomba, merengue, cumbia)
- ❑ Both Latino and American dances (disco, plena, break dancing, salsa, vogueing, bomba, merengue, cumbia)
- ❑ Only or mostly American dances (disco, break dancing, vogueing)

22. What kind of **stories** do you know?

- ❑ Only or mostly Latino stories (Juan Bobo, La Llorona, El Velatorio de la Abuela)
- ❑ Both Latino and American stories (Juan Bobo, Cinderella, La Llorona, Paul Bunyan, El Velatorio de la Abuela, Johnny Appleseed)
- ❑ Only or mostly American stories (Cinderella, Paul Bunyan, Johnny Appleseed)

23. What kind of **stories** does your family know?

- ❑ Only or mostly Latino stories (Juan Bobo, La Llorona, El Velatorio de la Abuela)
- ❑ Both Latino and American stories (Juan Bobo, Cinderella, La Llorona, Paul Bunyan, El Velatorio de la Abuela, Johnny Appleseed)
- ❑ Only or mostly American stories (Cinderella, Paul Bunyan, Johnny Appleseed)

SAMPLE

Supplemental Survey Questions
Validation Item Measuring Ethnic Identity

Ancestry:

	African American/ Black	Mexican	Mexican and Puerto Rican	Puerto Rican	Euro-pean (White) not Hispanic	Other (write in)
How do you describe yourself?						

Validation Item Measuring Generation

For each question, please check one answer.

	Mexico	Puerto Rico	United States	Somewhere else (where?)
Where were you born?				
Where was your mother born?				
Where was your father born?				